UNITED NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/1042
18 December 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

# FOURTEENTH PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of Security Council resolution 1020 (1995) of 10 November 1995, in which the Council adjusted the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and welcomed the recommendations for its new concept of operations outlined in my report of 23 October 1995 (S/1995/881). In that resolution, the Council also requested me to submit by 15 December 1995 a progress report on the situation in Liberia. Accordingly, the present report provides an update on the main political, military and humanitarian developments since my last report, as well as on the implementation of the mandate of UNOMIL.

## II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. The Liberian peace process remains generally on course and some progress has been made during the reporting period. However, implementation of the military aspects of the Abuja Agreement has fallen behind schedule. On 27 October 1995, I co-chaired with the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, and the Chairman of the Liberian Council of State, Prof. Wilton Sankawulo, a Conference on Assistance to Liberia held at United Nations Headquarters. More than 100 participants, including representatives of Member States, the European Community, the Organization of African Unity, United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, attended the conference. A total of $145.7 million was pledged for humanitarian assistance, demobilization, rehabilitation and for the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

3. As part of my efforts to sustain the momentum of the peace process, I visited Ghana from 26 to 29 November 1995 for consultations with the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Rawlings, who expressed his disappointment that the international community had not provided adequate assistance, especially for ECOMOG, during the pledging conference for Liberia. None the less, despite the lack of resources, President Rawlings said he had decided to increase Ghana's contribution of troops.

4. On 29 November 1995, I proceeded to Monrovia where I met with members of the Liberian Council of State. During our discussions, I told them that they needed to demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process by ensuring respect for the cease-fire and implementing in a timely manner the Abuja Agreement, especially the provisions relating to disarmament and demobilization. I stressed that such action would encourage the international community to disburse some of the funds that had been pledged at the Conference on Assistance to Liberia.

5. The members of the Council of State assured me of their commitment to the peace process. They noted that, despite the differences that had existed between them a few months ago, they were now working together as a team and the Council of State was taking all decisions by consensus. The members also assured me that, while some minor skirmishes were unavoidable, they would not allow the peace process to be derailed and were determined to hold presidential and national elections on schedule in August 1996. However, they deeply regretted the lack of support for ECOMOG from the international community, which they felt could delay and even jeopardize the peace process.

6. During the reporting period, ECOWAS and my Special Representative, Mr. Anthony Nyakyi, have encouraged the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG) and the faction leaders to make every effort to contain the skirmishes that emerged during the first two months of the cease-fire, particularly between the wing of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy headed by Mr. Alhaji Kromah (ULIMO-K) and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Mr. Charles Taylor. In that connection, the Council of State designated Councilman Mr. George Boley, leader of the Liberian Peace Council (LPC), to mediate between NPFL and ULIMO-K. On 30 November 1995, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Kromah signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to cease all hostilities, to create a buffer zone between their forces in the St. Paul River Bridge area of Lofa County, to guarantee the free movement of civilians and commercial activity in the areas under their control and to cooperate fully with relief organizations. They also called on ECOMOG to deploy immediately to the buffer zone.

7. The Memorandum of Understanding prompted the other factions to withdraw their allegations of cease-fire violations and to reaffirm their commitment to resolve their differences peacefully. It also prompted the faction leaders to begin reopening major roads to inaccessible areas of the country. This initiative resulted in the opening of roads linking Monrovia to Lofa, Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties through Bong County. NPFL, ULIMO-K and LPC forces have since worked together to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the newly accessible areas. It is hoped that roads leading to the south-east will also be opened soon.

8. My Special Representative has encouraged leaders of the factions personally to visit their combatants in order to inform them about the peace process and prepare them for disarmament and demobilization. Where possible, he has provided the faction leaders with transportation facilities and accompanied them on such visits.

9. LNTG has continued to fill outstanding appointments in the various governmental bodies, particularly in the Transitional Legislative Assembly (TLA). To date, 12 of the 13 members of TLA, representing the various counties, have been inducted.

## III. MILITARY ASPECTS

### Status of the cease-fire and disengagement of forces

10. Although the cease-fire has generally held and no widespread or protracted fighting has been reported, recurrent skirmishes were reported between NPFL and ULIMO-K in the areas around Suacoco, Gbarnga and St. Paul River Bridge in October. Since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Mr. Taylor and Mr. Kromah on 30 November, hostilities between the factions have reportedly ceased.

11. Other reported cease-fire violations include the harassment of a UNOMIL Military Observer, who was detained and robbed by fighters from Mr. Roosevelt Johnson's wing of ULIMO (ULIMO-J) along the Kakata-Bong Mines road on 21 October 1995. In related incidents on the same day, a Médecins Sans Frontières vehicle was seized and its occupants harassed and three ECOMOG soldiers were disarmed and robbed by ULIMO-J combatants. Tension mounted again in Kakata on 27 November when ULIMO-J fighters harassed ECOMOG soldiers. In November, reports were also received of harassment of civilians by LPC fighters in Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties.

12. In accordance with the Abuja Agreement, the factions were to have disengaged their forces by 26 September. There has been no change in the status of disengagement since my last report, when I indicated that little progress had been made. While, as noted above, NPFL and ULIMO-K have agreed to disengage their forces in the St. Paul River Bridge area, they have not actually done so. The factions continue to maintain that they will disengage and dismantle their checkpoints only when ECOMOG deploys to their areas of control.

### Deployment of UNOMIL and ECOMOG

13. Major-General Mahmoud Talha (Egypt) assumed the duties of Chief Military Observer of UNOMIL on 7 December 1995. In its resolution 1020 (1995), the Security Council authorized a maximum deployment of 160 military observers. The total military strength of UNOMIL is currently 71 observers (see annex). Recently arrived observers have enabled UNOMIL to strengthen its presence at the field stations in Buchanan and Kakata and to create mobile teams for Monrovia and Tubmanburg. While the Monrovia team has started operating, the Tubmanburg team has not yet been deployed, pending the rehabilitation of infrastructure at the team site. Further deployment of UNOMIL military observers will depend on the deployment of ECOMOG troops and progress in the peace process.

14. In accordance with the schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement, the deployment of ECOMOG and UNOMIL was to have commenced on 2 October and to have been completed by 14 December 1995. Owing to the lack of logistic resources, ECOMOG troops were not able to deploy beyond their present area of

operations on schedule (see map). However, on 14 December, with the provision of initial assistance, ECOMOG began to deploy to critical areas, including assembly sites and brigade headquarters, in order to facilitate the commencement of disarmament and demobilization. In this connection, the Government of Nigeria has recently provided communications equipment to ECOMOG. Efforts are also under way to hire trucks locally for the force.

15. Regarding troop contributors to ECOMOG, the Government of Burkina Faso has indicated its willingness to contribute two battalions to ECOMOG subject to the provision of logistic support. Indications have been given that the two additional battalions pledged by Nigeria and the battalion committed by Ghana will be deployed shortly.

Disarmament and demobilization

16. UNOMIL and ECOMOG have jointly finalized a draft plan for disarmament and demobilization which, inter alia, identifies the specific tasks to be undertaken by ECOMOG, LNTG and UNOMIL at the assembly sites. The draft plan has been forwarded to the Council of State for its consideration.

17. According to the schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement, reconnaissance of assembly sites by UNOMIL, ECOMOG, LNTG and the concerned factions was to have been completed by 30 September 1995 and the sites were to have been ready to receive combatants by 9 November 1995, with disarmament and demobilization scheduled to commence on 1 December 1995. While the final determination of requirements for the rehabilitation of facilities at the sites is near completion, actual work has not yet begun, owing to transportation constraints and the change of some proposed sites which were found unsuitable. It is expected that resources for disarmament and demobilization will be available by mid-January 1996. Disarmament could therefore begin at that time, subject to the deployment of ECOMOG and the full cooperation of the factions.

## IV. HUMAN RIGHTS

18. UNOMIL investigated a report of violence between armed elements of NPFL in Tapitta, Nimba County, from 26 to 28 September, resulting in civilian casualties. UNOMIL continues to follow the case and is negotiating access to four NPFL combatants reported to have been detained by NPFL and charged with the violence there.

19. UNOMIL is also investigating reported executions by the LPC High Command of LPC combatants accused of indiscipline and harassment of civilians in Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties. UNOMIL maintains regular contact with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Liberian factions, ECOMOG and the Disarmament Committee to monitor the status of prisoners of war.

20. UNOMIL is attempting to secure voluntary assistance for a training programme in human rights monitoring to be conducted by African human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The programme will address the forthcoming pre-electoral period and the elections themselves. UNOMIL is also assisting local human rights NGOs to coordinate their efforts more effectively.

21. UNOMIL continues to monitor the status and condition of civilian detainees, the majority of whom are held without trial at the Monrovia Central Prison. UNOMIL is working with the Liberian Ministry of Justice, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the United Nations Secretariat in Vienna to examine ways in which the international community can strengthen the Liberian justice system.

## V. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

22. Humanitarian assistance activities continue to be of critical importance. With security still tenuous in many areas, approximately 1.5 million internally displaced and war-affected persons remain in need of emergency relief. The northern and eastern sections of the country, which have been cut off from aid for up to three years, are badly in need of assistance. In response, humanitarian organizations have maintained pre-Abuja levels of assistance as they take steps to expand operations to previously inaccessible areas. These efforts have in the past been impeded by the lack of security and occasional clashes between factions. In this connection, a number of NGOs were forced to suspend their activities in early October. Recently, however, security has improved and access has increased.

23. In September, Médecins Sans Frontières-France initiated humanitarian activity in Greenville by transporting staff and equipment to the town from Monrovia by boat. This initiative represented the first visit of an international relief organization to the Greenville area in over a year. United Nations inter-agency and NGO missions also undertook assessments of the Zwedru area in Grand Gedeh County and in Lofa County as far as Vahun. In both instances, the missions represented ground-breaking steps towards re-establishing a much-needed humanitarian presence in those areas. Steps are being taken to increase access to these areas by road.

24. The return of the more than 750,000 Liberian refugees from neighbouring countries has remained slow. While some voluntary repatriation has occurred from Côte d'Ivoire and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) intends to assist 1,500 refugees in returning from eastern Guinea, a large-scale return will depend on minimum guarantees of security and stability. An influx of refugees continues from Sierra Leone into Grand Cape Mount and Lofa counties, with 3,000 refugees registered since early September. UNHCR provides international protection and multi-sectoral assistance in Liberia to approximately 53,000 refugees from Sierra Leone.

25. In preparation for the eventual large-scale return of refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized combatants, the humanitarian assistance community is collaborating to develop a framework for reintegration. Pursuant to my last report, the newly appointed United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Tesema Negash, arrived in Monrovia on 28 November to coordinate humanitarian assistance.

## VI. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

26. While the peace process has seen an increase in economic activity in a few areas, full recovery of an economy devastated by war remains one of the principal challenges facing Liberia. Strategies being developed to this end will focus on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economic and social infrastructure, restructuring the economy and strengthening public administration.

27. A joint UNDP/World Bank mission is currently in Liberia at the request of LNTG to prepare for the Special Consultation Meeting on Liberia scheduled for March 1996. The mission is examining both short-term grant assistance and possible long-term stabilization measures, emphasizing the Government's agreement on priority actions and its commitment to transparency and accountability. This initiative will complement UNDP efforts to develop programmes to support the reintegration of war-affected persons and ex-combatants, focusing on training and capacity-building projects.

28. Other United Nations humanitarian agencies and programmes are also taking steps to link their emergency relief activities to rehabilitation. The World Food Programme (WFP) will continue with its emergency activities, including general food distribution, a school feeding programme and a food-for-work programme. As peace unfolds, WFP will target its assistance to resettlement areas. It is also preparing to feed the approximately 60,000 ex-combatants during the demobilization period. For its part, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is distributing seeds and tools to increase household food security. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continues to work towards improving the health and nutritional status of women and children in Liberia. The World Health Organization (WHO) is playing its traditional role in the health sector, focusing on the control and prevention of diseases, as well as technical support for local health structures, including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

## VII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

29. On the basis of the adjustments made to the mandate of UNOMIL by resolution 1020 (1995), I have presented to the General Assembly for its consideration cost estimates totalling $2.9 million gross per month for maintaining the Observer Mission from 1 January to 30 June 1996.

30. As of 30 November 1995, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIL special account since its inception amounted to $8.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations on 30 November 1995 was $2.027 million.

31. Since my last report, there have been no further voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Liberia.

## VIII. OBSERVATIONS

32. As already noted, the implementation of the Abuja Agreement is behind schedule. The critical aspects of the Agreement, disarmament and demobilization, are not likely to begin before January 1996. While this is a cause for concern, the delay should be seen in the context of the implementation timetable, which may have underestimated the delays involved in deploying the necessary personnel and equipment. The provision of logistic support for ECOMOG is especially complicated since it is essentially provided on a voluntary basis from non-ECOWAS countries.

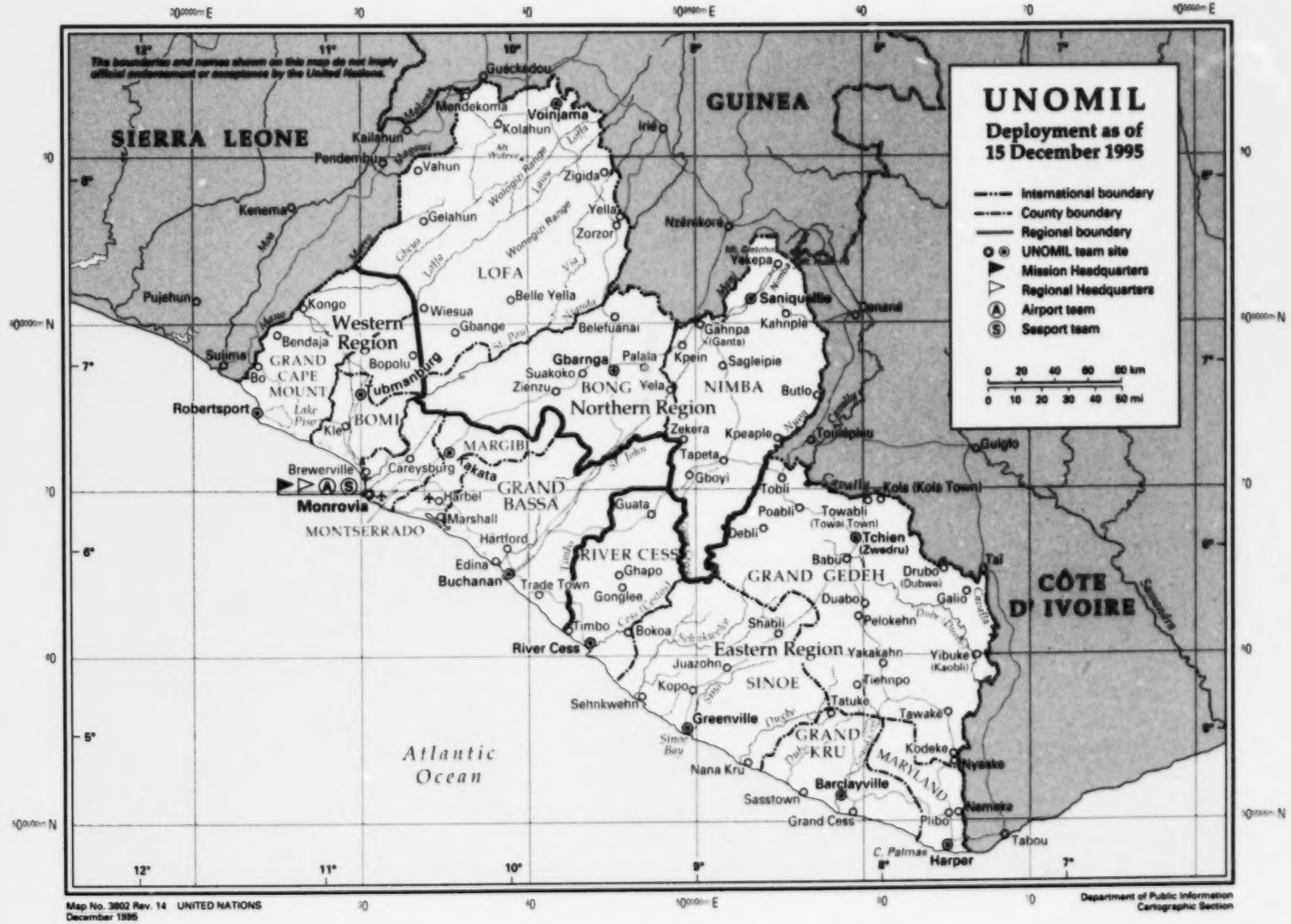
33. Every effort must now be made to avoid further delays and to implement the Abuja Agreement as rapidly as feasible. ECOMOG, LNTG, the factions, UNOMIL and the Member States which pledged resources to ECOMOG must cooperate to ensure that personnel and equipment are in place to begin disarmament and demobilization. It is essential that the factions cooperate fully in implementing the Agreement. The first step in this process is the complete disengagement of forces. I urge the Liberian leaders to continue to demonstrate their commitment to the peace process by ensuring respect for the cease-fire and the timely implementation of the Abuja Agreement, especially disarmament and demobilization. I shall report further on progress made in this regard before the expiration of the mandate of UNOMIL on 31 January 1996.

## Annex

### Composition of military component of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia as at 15 December 1995

| | Observers | Others | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | 5 | 7 a/ | 12 |
| China | 5 | | 5 |
| Czech Republic | 6 | | 6 |
| Egypt | 6 | | 6 |
| Guinea-Bissau | 5 | | 5 |
| India | 5 | | 5 |
| Jordan | 6 | | 6 |
| Kenya | 8 | | 8 |
| Malaysia | 8 | | 8 |
| Pakistan | 6 | | 6 |
| Uruguay | 4 | - | 4 |
| Total | 64 | 7 | 71 |

a/ Medical staff.


UNOMIL
Deployment as of
15 December 1995
International boundary
County boundary
Regional boundary
UNOMIL team site
Mission Headquarters
Regional Headquarters
Airport team
Seaport team
0 20 40 60 80 km
0 10 20 30 40 50 mi
The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
SIERRA LEONE
GUINEA
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Atlantic Ocean
Western Region
Northern Region
Eastern Region
LOFA
GRAND CAPE MOUNT
BOMI
MARGIBI
GRAND BASSA
MONTSERRADO
RIVER CESS
GRAND GEDEH
SINOE
GRAND KRU
MARYLAND
BONG
NIMBA
GBARPOLU
Monrovia
Robertsport
Buchanan
River Cess
Greenville
Barclayville
Harper
Voinjama
Kolahun
Zorzor
Belle Yella
Saniquellie
Ganta
Sanniquellie
Tchien (Zwedru)
Kolo (Kolo Town)
Towabli (Towai Town)
Tubmanburg
Careysburg
Brewerville
Harbel
Marshall
Hartford
Edina
Trade Town
Ghapo
Gonglee
Timbo
Bokoa
Juazohn
Kopo
Sehnkwehn
Nana Kru
Sasstown
Grand Cess
Plibo
Nimba Mts.
Wonegizi Range
Loffa
Mano
Cavalla
Sinoe
Duobe
Dubwe
Nyanwa
St. John
Lake Piso
Mt. Gletschuh
Mt. Wuteve
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December 1995
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